(c) the future expansion plan to boost trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The bilateral trade between India and New Zealand during the year 2003-04 is of the order of US$ 163.87 million as compared to US$ 144.10 million during the previous year.

(c) The trade between the two countries is monitored through the institutional mechanisms such as the Joint Trade Committee (JTC) and Joint Business Council (JBC). In additioin, our Mission has also been organizing Buyer Seller Meets to boost the trade.

WTO Draft Agreement

1185. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Conference of 148 countries was held in Geneva last month to discuss WTO draft agreement to set the broad colours of new World Trade Order;

(b) if so, whether India's grave concern regarding safeguarding the interests of the farming sector was effectively represented at the Conference; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the developed countries thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The General Council of the 147-Member WTO met in Geneva during 27 July to 1 August, 2004 with a view to arriving at a consensus on adopting a Framework Agreement that would set a roadmap for the on-going negotiations under the Doha Work Programme.

(b) and (c) An Indian delegation led by the Minister of Commerce and Industry actively participated in the negotiations, leading to this Framework Agreement adopted on the 1st August, 2004. With a view to safeguarding the interests of the farming sector India made concerted

efforts with like-minded developing countries, including in the G-20 alliance on agriculture and the G- 33 alliance on Special Products. This has ensured, *inter alia*, that the elements and principles incorporated in the agreed framework on agriculture will lead to substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic subsidies provided to their farm sector largely by the developed countries, a credible end date for elimination of their export subsidies, and substantial market access improvements for products of export interest to developing countries. Moreover, consistent with the Doha mandate to negotiate on agriculture, any additional commitments, particularly in market access, by developing countries like India should serve to safeguard their food and livelihood security concerns and rural development needs. A new Special Safeguard Mechanism will also be instituted for use of developing countries to deal with any import surge. The Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture was adopted by consensus by all developed and developing country Members.

WTO talks on agriculture

1186. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prospects of agreement on agriculture at the WTO appear bleak looking at the wide gap in the views of the developing countries and the developed countries;

(b) the reasons for not sending Indian representative to the Mini-Ministerial Conference held at London recently; and

(c) the measures Government are taking to muster more and more support for India so as to reach on agreement which helps India and its farming community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) In the on-going negotiations on the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture, India has built alliances with like-minded countries, including the G-20 on agriculture and the G-33 on Special Products, in order to ensure, *inter alia*, that trade-distorting domestic subsidies